

REMARKS

Claims 1-19, 21-28, and 32-34 are now pending in the application. Claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 22, and 24 are now amended. The amendments to the dependent claims simply reflect amendments made to the independent claims. Claims 32-34 are now added. Claims 20 and 29-31 are now cancelled. The claim amendments and new claims are fully supported by the application as filed and do not present new matter. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

Applicant thanks the Examiner for recognizing Applicant's election of Claims 1-28 with traverse.

Claims 29-31 stand withdrawn as allegedly being drawn to an invention that is distinct from Claims 1-28 and covered by different USPTO classifications. Applicant submits that examination of all 31 claims as filed will not place an undue burden on the Examiner. However, to expedite prosecution of this case Applicant now cancels Claims 29-31 without prejudice to Applicant's right to present these claims in a related application.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §§ 102/103

Claims 1, 3-5, 15, 17 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Russell (U.S. Pat. No. 4,333,300) or Muzinich (U.S. Pat. No. 3,161,004) or Carlson (U.S. Pat. No. 4,033,090) or Johnson (U.S. Pat. No. 4,662,150).

Claims 1-5, 10, 15-17 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Harkness (U.S. Pat. No. 3,830,036).

Claims 6, 8, 10, 11, 15, 18, 20, and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Muzinich (U.S. Pat. No. 3,161,004) or Carlson (U.S. Pat. No. 4,033,090) or Johnson (U.S. Pat. No. 4,662,150).

Claims 2 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Muzinich (U.S. Pat. No. 3,161,004) or Carlson (U.S. Pat. No. 4,033,090) or Johnson (U.S. Pat. No. 4,662,150) and further in view of Harkness (U.S. Pat. No. 3,830,036).

Claims 7, 9, 13, 14 and 22-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Muzinich (U.S. Pat. No. 3,161,004) or Carlson (U.S. Pat. No. 4,033,090) or Johnson (U.S. Pat. No. 4,662,150) and further in view of Paxton (U.S. Pat. No. 3,126,685).

These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent Claim 1 is now amended to recite, in part and with reference to Figures 1 and 2 for exemplary purposes only, an inbound portion 22 having a first angled cradle 44 and a second angled cradle 50 each to support the container at an angle. The first angled cradle is adjacent to the second angled cradle.

In contrast, the Russell reference appears to disclose, as set forth by the Office Action, an inbound portion 22a, which is described in the detailed description as an inclined table 22a. However, the Russell reference fails to disclose or suggest an inbound portion having a first angled cradle adjacent to a second angled cradle for supporting a container at an angle, as set forth in amended Claim 1.

The Muzinich reference appears to disclose, as set forth by the Office Action, an inbound portion 34, which the detailed description describes as channels 34 that define a platform. Platform 34 has a tapered plate 22 to bias the crate toward rib 58 to prevent inadvertent displacement of the crate. However, the Muznich reference fails to disclose or suggest a platform or an inbound portion having a first angled cradle adjacent to a second angled cradle for supporting a container at an angle, as set forth in amended Claim 1.

The Carlson reference appears to disclose, as set forth by the Office Action, an inbound portion 14, which the detailed description describes as a table 14. The table 14 appears to be planar. The Carlson reference also appears to disclose an angled conveyer 56. Even though the conveyer is angled, the Carlson reference fails to disclose or suggest an inbound portion having a first angled cradle adjacent to a second angled cradle for supporting a container at an angle, as set forth in amended Claim 1.

The Johnson et al. reference appears to disclose, as set forth by the Office Action, an inbound portion 34, which the detailed description describes as a work surface 34 that appears to be planar. The Johnson et al. reference fails to disclose or suggest a work surface or an inbound portion having a first angled cradle adjacent to a second angled cradle for supporting a container at an angle, as set forth in amended Claim 1.

The Harkness et al. reference appears to disclose, as set forth by the Office Action, an inbound portion 22, which the detailed description describes as a conveyer 22. The Harkness et al. reference fails to disclose or suggest an inbound portion or a

conveyer having a first angled cradle adjacent to a second angled cradle for supporting a container at an angle, as set forth in amended Claim 1.

As set forth above, each and every feature of amended Claim 1 is not disclosed by the art of record and not suggested by the art of record, alone or in combination. Therefore, Claim 1 and those claims dependent therefrom are not anticipated or obvious in light of the art of record. Applicant respectfully requests that the § 102 rejection of Claim 1 and those claims dependent therefrom be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Independent Claim 15 is now amended to recite, in part and with reference to Figures 5 and 6 for exemplary purposes only, an outbound portion 24 including an outbound cradle 110 to support the container at an angle. The outbound cradle has a first angled portion 112 and a second angled portion 114. The cradle moves between a forward position A and a rear position B.

The Russell reference appears to disclose, as set forth by the Office Action, an outbound portion 90, which is described in the detailed description as a feed belt 90. The belt 90 includes arms 154a and 178a that hold an envelope 24a open at what appears to be an angle and transports the envelope across table 12. However, the belt 90 fails to disclose or suggest an outbound cradle with a first angled portion and a second angled portion that moves between a forward position and a rear position, as set forth in amended Claim 15.

The Muzinich reference appears to disclose, as set forth by the Office Action, an outbound portion 18, which is described in the detailed description as an upper horizontal reach 18. The reach 18 is planar. The Muzinich reference fails to disclose or

suggest the reach 18 having an outbound cradle having a first angled portion and a second angled portion that moves between a forward position and a rear position, as set forth in amended Claim 15.

The Carlson reference appears to disclose, as set forth by the Office Action, an outbound portion 49, which is described in the detailed description as a conveyer 49. The conveyer 49 is planar and the Carlson reference fails to disclose or suggest the conveyer 49 having a first angled portion and a second angled portion that moves between a forward position and a rear position, as set forth in amended Claim 15.

The Johnson et al. reference appears to disclose, as set forth by the Office Action, an outbound portion 14, which the detailed description describes as an upper taping means 14. The taping means 14 is on a planar deck and the Johnson et al. reference fails to disclose or suggest an outbound portion having a first angled portion and a second angled portion that moves between a forward position and a rear position, as set forth in amended Claim 15.

The Harkness reference appears to disclose, as set forth by the Office Action, an outbound portion 30, which the detailed description describes as an exit package retaining station 30. Figure 8 illustrates the retaining station 30 as being angled. However, the Harkness reference fails to disclose or suggest the retaining station 30 as having a first angled portion and a second angled portion that moves between a forward position and a rear position, as set forth in amended Claim 15.

As set forth above, the art of record fails to disclose or suggest each and every feature of amended Claim 15. Therefore, Claim 15 and those claims dependent therefrom are not anticipated or obvious in light of the art of record. Applicant

respectfully requests that the § 102 and § 103 rejections of Claim 15 and those claims dependent therefrom be reconsidered and withdrawn.

NEW CLAIMS

New Claims 32 through 34 are now added. The new claims are fully supported by the application as filed and do not present new matter.

Independent Claim 32 generally recites, with reference to the figures, an inbound portion 22 having an inbound cradle 44,50 to support the container at an angle. An outbound portion has an outbound cradle 110 to support the container at an angle. Also, a fastening device 86 is claimed. The inbound portion and the outbound portion are positioned at an angle relative to each other of less than 180°.

As set forth above, these features are not disclosed by or suggested by the art of record. Specifically, the only cited reference that discloses a fastening device is the Johnson et al. reference at 14. However, the Johnson et al. reference, as well as the other art of record, fails to disclose or suggest an inbound cradle to support a container at an angle and an outbound portion having an outbound cradle to support the container at an angle. Applicant requests consideration of the new claims and allowance of the new claims because they are not anticipated by or obvious in light of the art of record.

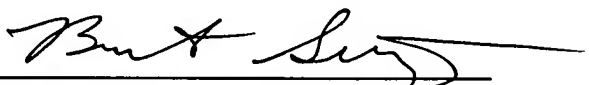
CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is

believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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